

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph at page 15, lines 6-19 with the following:

Figure 4 provides a flowchart of a process for checking and distributing software in accordance with the invention. As shown, at step 410, SDS 260 contacts one of HDT's 122 in network 100. At step 412, SDS 260 identifies the software version on an OMU firmware card 216 on the selected HDT 122. If at step 414, the software is not the desired version, at step 416, SDS 260 downloads the appropriate software. However, if at step 414, the OMU card 216 has the correct software version, at step 418, SDS 260 determines if there are other OMU firmware cards 216 on HDT 122. If so, SDS 360 repeats the process beginning with step 412. If at step 418 no other OMU cards 216 are located in the HDT 122, SDS 260 proceeds to check the software versions on OIU cards ~~[[216]]~~ 214.

Please replace the paragraph at page 12, line 13 – page 13, line 1 with the following:

Network ~~[[110]]~~ 100 also comprises software distribution system (SDS) 260. SDS 260 operates to distribute software upgrades to firmware cards located in HDT's 122 and ONU's 118 as described below in connection with Figure 4. More specifically, SDS 260 operates to distribute software to OMU 216 and OIU 214 firmware cards comprised in HDT's 122 and OIU firmware cards 210 located on ONU's 118. SDS 260 may be comprised in a computing system such as is described in connection with Figure 3. Those skilled in the art will recognize, however, that the functionality described herein as corresponding to SDS 260 might be integrated in EMS 250.